



# EPISCOPAL NEWS SERVICE

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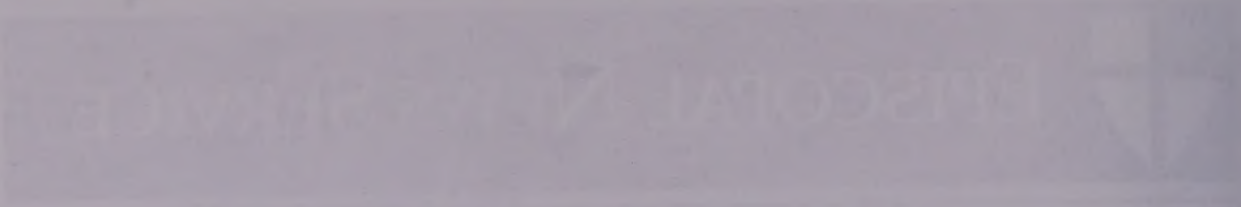
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# *news digest*

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94127D

## **Presiding bishop describes leak of sexuality teaching as 'reprehensible'**

In a strongly worded letter to bishops of the Episcopal Church, Presiding Bishop Edmond Browning rebuked members of Episcopalians United (EU), a traditionalist organization of Episcopalians, for releasing a copy of an embargoed draft of a pastoral teaching on sexuality. Declaring the unauthorized release of the draft, only two months before the 71st General Convention, as "utterly reprehensible and unworthy behavior for those who declare themselves to be part of our household of faith," Browning said that EU "apparently believe they are...justified in using whatever means to derail the process the bishops have established." In a June 23 press release, EU described the process of developing the teaching as "pernicious" and "distrustful," and announced that it would provide the fourth draft of the sexuality teaching to anyone requesting a copy. They also sent copies to all deputies and alternates.

The pastoral teaching on sexuality is one of the responses to a compromise resolution (A104sa) adopted at the 1991 General Convention in Phoenix calling for a pastoral and a study of sexuality issues at the local level. During that convention, bishops and deputies affirmed the church's teaching that sexual expression was appropriate only within the context of heterosexual marriage, but also recognized the 'discontinuity' that exists between the church's teaching and the experience of many of its members.

The General Convention resolution said that the pastoral teaching on the subject of sexuality should be informed by the churchwide dialogue, as well as from "insight as is necessary from theologians, theological ethicists, social scientists, and gay and lesbian persons." During the past three years a 15-member committee that included nine bishops, three clergy deputies and



three lay deputies from the 1991 General Convention submitted four drafts of a pastoral teaching to the House of Bishops for discussion and revision.

94128D

## **Bishop of Hawaii resigns in the wake of fiscal crisis over loan for retirement center**

In the wake of a complicated fiscal crisis stemming from the church's guaranty of a \$4 million bank loan for a retirement facility, Bishop Donald Hart resigned as bishop of Hawaii on June 26. In a letter read in all parishes, Hart said that he was "profoundly sorry" for the complicated fiscal problems that he will leave behind, adding that "as much as I would like to be a part of the healing process and to participate in the development of the solution to the problems that confront the diocese, I have come to the conclusion that under the circumstances, that would not be possible."

The financial crisis resulted from the diocese's guaranty of a bank loan for Episcopal Homes of Hawaii (EHH), a nonprofit organization formed in 1989 to develop a luxury retirement community. Hart served as chairman of the board of directors until he resigned in April as questions surfaced about the fiscal stability of the project.

As chairman, Hart had persuaded the diocesan council and its finance department to guarantee a \$4 million bank loan for EHH, without disclosing to diocesan officials that the developer of the project had declared bankruptcy for more than \$11.5 million in 1986 in California. In addition, the current project began to run out of money and was incurring substantial debts. The Diocese of Hawaii faces liability for the \$4 million loan to EHH, throwing the diocese into a financial crisis. Sources estimated it could take over 20 years for the diocese to pay off the loan.

94129D

## **Scottish Episcopal Church votes to ordain women as priests**

By the required two-thirds margin, the General Synod of the Scottish Episcopal Church approved legislation on June 16 clearing the way for the ordination of women to the priesthood. After the vote, one woman who had supported the legislation said, "The Holy Spirit is leading us into new insights."



The Most Rev. Richard Holloway, primus (primate) of the Scottish Episcopal Church, described the vote as "historic," but noted that the decision was "late in the day, as far as the Anglican Communion is concerned, though we have been discussing it for over 20 years and voted on it at the synod in 1975." He also called the proposal before the synod "traumatic" and hoped that a way of "transfiguration" would allow the church to experience both continuity and discontinuity in its communal life.

Following the vote, the synod approved a resolution expressing its contention that the decision to ordain women "desires and intends no break with the tradition of the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, in which the Scottish Episcopal Church has always professed itself to be." And synod members also reached out to the opponents of the ordination of women, saying that they "will continue for all time to come to have a valued and respected place (within the Scottish Episcopal Church)." The resolution also called for penitence and sadness over the lack of consensus on this matter in the whole church.

94130D

## **Church should take lead in advocacy for children in crisis, Edelman tells coalition**

Churches must be "the engine and not the caboose" in "the movement to stop the killing, the abuse, and the violence" against children, one of the nation's top advocates for children told the Episcopal Church's Urban Bishops Coalition meeting in Boston June 9-10. Speaking at a dinner meeting of 40 bishops, clergy and lay leaders, Marion Wright Edelman, founder and president of the Children's Defense Fund, said that churches can and must exert their moral authority to confront issues of poverty, abuse and violence that are destroying America's children and families. She encouraged the group to find ways for the church "to reclaim its role as center for children and families to learn, to study, to play, to feel wanted and welcomed and listened to."

The meeting was designed "to be a planning session and learning seminar," according to Bishop Arthur Walmsley, the retired bishop of Connecticut who is secretary of the coalition. "We hope to build a movement from the bottom up to respond to our national crisis of children at risk," he said. Bishop David E. Johnson of Massachusetts, who organized and hosted the meeting, said that "the reality is that all of our children are at risk. This is the most compelling issue facing our church and society. We must dispel what



we think we know about children and their issues--and become learners." The key is the church's ability to "let go of other agendas," Johnson said. "The church does not need to be there with its own institutional agenda, the church is there because God has called us to be present." And the goal is "freedom and dignity for all."

94131D

## **Rwandan church leaders plead for peace in their homeland and help from afar**

As French troops were gathering at the Rwandan border to seek an end to the carnage in that East African country, Anglican Church leaders from Rwanda were attempting to marshal relief aid and other assistance during an international tour. Describing the conflict in Rwanda as evidence of "the power of the devil," Archbishop Augustin Nshamihigo, primate of the Episcopal Church of Rwanda, condemned the killings and called on the international community to intervene "for the restoration of peace in our country." In a statement distributed during a June 23 visit to the Episcopal Church Center in New York, he said, "We cry out in agony as we see hundreds of thousands of lives perish in this senseless and unreasonable war."

"Many church buildings were destroyed and many church people have died," said Bishop Jonathan Ruhumuliza, bishop coadjutor of Kigali. More than a million Anglicans lived in Rwanda before the recent violence broke out. Although church services continue in parts of the country, the murder of three Roman Catholic bishops and the massacre of hundreds of Rwandans who sought sanctuary in church buildings has contributed to the fear that has gripped the countryside.

The bishops condemned the killing and called on the warring factions to negotiate a settlement. The purpose of their trip was to appeal to Anglican and ecumenical partners in Britain, Canada and the United States for relief assistance. "At the moment food is the most urgent need," Ruhumuliza said. "We are in desperate need of medicines and clothing, but food is the first priority," he added. The Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief sent an initial emergency grant for \$25,000 and the continuing response by the

Anglican Communion is currently coordinated by the Anglican Church of Canada.

94132D

## **Supreme Court rejects appeal in Colorado misconduct case**

The United States Supreme Court declined May 31 to consider an appeal by the Diocese of Colorado and its former bishop, William Frey, in a sexual misconduct suit. The highly publicized suit was brought by Mary E. Moses against Paul Robinson when she sought counseling from him while he was serving a Denver parish. The case was appealed to the nation's highest court after the Colorado Supreme Court affirmed several rulings in the case.

Moses, who is now known as Mary Tenantry, brought suit against the diocese, Frey and Robinson in 1990 but Robinson subsequently filed bankruptcy and was dropped from the suit. The jury in the district court decided against the diocese and Frey on three counts: that the diocese and Frey were liable for a breach of fiduciary duty, negligent in hiring and supervision, and vicariously liable for Robinson's breach of fiduciary duty, which exists when one person assumes the responsibility to act in another person's interest. Moses was awarded \$1.2 million in damages. Upon appeal, the Colorado Supreme Court upheld two parts of the lower court's findings but reversed the decision about vicarious liability, thus lowering the award to \$728,100.

Attorneys for the defense argued at the state appeal that such litigation against the diocese and the bishop violated free exercise of religion under the First Amendment. The state court rejected that claim, saying that cases not involving the interpretation of church doctrine are permissible and not a violation of First Amendment freedoms.



94127

## Presiding bishop describes leak of sexuality teaching as 'reprehensible'

by Jeffrey Penn

In a strongly worded letter to bishops of the Episcopal Church, Presiding Bishop Edmond Browning rebuked members of Episcopalians United (EU), a traditionalist organization of Episcopalians, for releasing a copy of an embargoed draft of a pastoral teaching on sexuality.

Declaring the unauthorized release of the draft, only two months before the 71st General Convention, as "utterly reprehensible and unworthy behavior for those who declare themselves to be part of our household of faith," Browning said that EU "apparently believe they are...justified in using whatever means to derail the process the bishops have established." (*See Newsfeatures for text of letter.*)

The pastoral teaching on sexuality is one of the responses to a compromise resolution (A104sa) adopted at the 1991 General Convention in Phoenix calling for a pastoral and a study of sexuality issues at the local level. During that convention, bishops and deputies affirmed the church's teaching that sexual expression was appropriate only within the context of heterosexual marriage, but also recognized the 'discontinuity' that exists between the church's teaching and the experience of many of its members.

The General Convention resolution said that the pastoral teaching on the subject of sexuality should be informed by the churchwide dialogue, as well as from "insight as is necessary from theologians, theological ethicists, social scientists, and gay and lesbian persons." During the past three years a 15-member committee that included nine bishops, three clergy deputies and three lay deputies from the 1991 General Convention submitted four drafts of a pastoral teaching to the House of Bishops for discussion and revision.

### Bishops seek consensus

Since the convention in Phoenix, the bishops have sought to implement a more collegial style of leadership, meeting twice a year and developing consensus on statements regarding racism and sexuality. Bishops agreed not to publish either statement, nor comment on their content, until they had built consensus.

In a June 23 press release, EU described the process of developing the teaching as "pernicious" and "distrustful," and announced that it would provide



the fourth draft of the sexuality teaching to anyone requesting a copy. They also sent copies to all deputies and alternates.

Although EU has criticized the fourth draft, members of the committee insist that the draft is moot, since significant changes have been made in response to comments by bishops at their March meeting in North Carolina. A fifth and final draft was ready by the end of June and will be considered by the House of Bishops in Indianapolis.

"I regret that the debate around the church provoked by the Episcopalians United action will be about a document that is no longer relevant," Browning said. "I hope that energy will be maintained for a good discussion about the actual report itself."

Browning insisted that the bishops' efforts to develop a teaching on sexuality would honor an "open and consultative" process as "we seek to discover God's will. We know that our report will not be an end, but a beginning."

Bishop John Howe of Central Florida, who is a prime mover behind attempts to change the nature of the General Convention and the office of the presiding bishop, responded that the leak of the draft was not the fault of Episcopalians United. And he charged that "the whole exercise has been skewed from the beginning. The appointees are not representative of the broad spectrum of this church but are representative of the a radical agenda-oriented wing of the church which has now--five times in a row--taken the pastoral teaching away from the house and reworked it according to their own predilections."

94128

## **Bishop of Hawaii resigns in the wake of fiscal crisis over loan for retirement center**

**by Jeffrey Penn**

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In a letter read in all parishes, Hart said that he was "profoundly sorry"



for the complicated fiscal problems he will leave behind, adding that "as much as I would like to be a part of the healing process and to participate in the development of the solution to the problems that confront the diocese, I have come to the conclusion that under the circumstances, that would not be possible."

The financial crisis resulted from the diocese's guaranty of a bank loan for Episcopal Homes of Hawaii (EHH), a nonprofit organization formed in 1989 to develop a luxury retirement community. Hart served as chairman of the board of directors until he resigned in April as questions surfaced about the fiscal stability of the project.

#### **Diocese liable for \$4 million**

As chairman, Hart had persuaded the diocesan council and its finance department to guarantee a \$4 million bank loan for EHH, without disclosing to diocesan officials that the developer of the project had declared bankruptcy for more than \$11.5 million in 1986 in California. In addition, the current project began to run out of money and was incurring substantial debts. The Diocese of Hawaii faces liability for the \$4 million loan to EHH, throwing the diocese into a financial crisis. Sources estimated it could take over 20 years for the diocese pay off the loan.

As the extent of financial problems became clearer, several local parishes began to demand a full accounting of the situation, and then to request that the bishop resign or face a vote of confidence.

In his resignation letter to parishes, Hart denied that there was any wrongdoing involved in the case. "My intentions, and I believe the intentions for all who voted for the guarantee, were to act in the best interest of the diocese and of our mission to support the ministry in many different ways in the community," he continued.

Yet, Hart concluded, "After long and prayerful consideration, I have decided that it is in the best interests of our diocese and that of my family for me to resign as bishop of Hawaii." Hart's resignation will be considered at the upcoming meeting of the House of Bishops during the General Convention in Indianapolis.

#### **What's next?**

At a June 18 budget meeting, the diocesan council outlined a strategy to revise the budget in order to respond to the crisis. For the immediate future, the diocese will have to absorb \$465,000 in unbudgeted expenses in 1994, \$500,000 in 1995 and an additional \$500,000 in 1996. The council has decided to defer payments totalling more than \$83,000 to the national church



and Province 8. "We're planning to pay it, we just don't have the money right now," David Chung, chair of the diocesan finance department, told reporters. "We will try to make it up in subsequent years." The diocese will consider increasing assessments to parishes from 23 percent to 30 percent of local income.

Hart will work with the diocese's standing committee to resolve financial difficulties and prepare for "an orderly transition."

94129

## **Scottish Episcopal Church votes to ordain women as priests**

**by James Rosenthal**

By the required two-thirds margin, the General Synod of the Scottish Episcopal Church approved legislation on June 16 clearing the way for the ordination of women to the priesthood.

The vote was:

**Clergy** Yes 66, No 12 (53 required)

**Laity** Yes 56, No 22 (53 required)

**Bishops** Yes 6, No 0 (4 required)

After the vote, one woman who had supported the legislation said, "The Holy Spirit is leading us into new insights."

The Most Rev. Richard Holloway, primus (primate) of the Scottish Episcopal Church, described the vote as "historic," but noted that the decision was "late in the day, as far as the Anglican Communion is concerned, though we have been discussing it for over 20 years and voted on it at the synod in 1975." He also called the proposal before the synod "traumatic" and hoped that a way of "transfiguration" would allow the church to experience both continuity and discontinuity in its communal life.

During a sermon in worship service prior to the vote, Archbishop Robin Eames of Ireland encouraged the synod members to think of the

Robin Eames of Ireland encouraged the synod members to think of the Anglican Communion as a "jigsaw of diversity...struggling to find what is God's will in a particular time and circumstance." He urged Anglicans to live with the "greatest degree of communion possible" when they disagree.

#### **No break with tradition**

Following the vote, the synod approved a resolution expressing its contention that the decision to ordain women "desires and intends no break with the tradition of the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, in which the Scottish Episcopal Church has always professed itself to be." And synod members also reached out to the opponents of the ordination of women, saying that they "will continue for all time to come to have a valued and respected place (within the Scottish Episcopal Church)." The resolution also called for penitence and sadness over the lack of consensus on this matter in the whole church.

No safeguards or financial provisions would be incorporated into the canons, for those opposed to the decision. Bishop Bruce Cameron of Aberdeen encouraged the synod to trust the bishops in the pastoral and personal implications presented by the decision. The bishops would give "individual and compassionate consideration to each specific case," Cameron said.

—James Rosenthal is director of the Anglican Communion News Service in London.

94130

## **Church should take lead in advocacy for children in crisis, Edelman tells coalition**

**by Jay Cormier**

Churches must be "the engine and not the caboose" in "the movement to stop the killing, the abuse, and the violence" against children, one of the nation's top advocates for children told the Episcopal Church's Urban Bishops Coalition meeting in Boston June 9-10.



Speaking at a dinner meeting of 40 bishops, clergy and lay leaders, Marion Wright Edelman, founder and president of the Children's Defense Fund said that churches can and must exert their moral authority to confront issues of poverty, abuse and violence that are destroying America's children and families. She encouraged the group to find ways for the church "to reclaim its role as center for children and families to learn, to study, to play, to feel wanted and welcomed and listened to."

The meeting was designed "to be a planning session and learning seminar," according to Bishop Arthur Walmsley, the retired bishop of Connecticut who is secretary of the coalition. "We hope to build a movement from the bottom up to respond to our national crisis of children at risk," he said.

### **All of our children are at risk**

Bishop David E. Johnson of Massachusetts, who organized and hosted the meeting, said that "the reality is that all of our children are at risk. This is the most compelling issue facing our church and society. We must dispel what we think we know about children and their issues--and become learners." Johnson helped establish an organization that has recruited and trained volunteers to serve as tutors and mentors in the state's school districts and build a network of advocacy on behalf of children.

The key is the church's ability to "let go of other agendas," Johnson said. "The church does not need to be there with its own institutional agenda, the church is there because God has called us to be present." And the goal is "freedom and dignity for all."

Before we can shape a response, we must "get to the reasons why children are at risk in our society," contended Joyce Strom, executive director of the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, in her keynote address. "We have to get beyond cases and get to causes....we have to model what we want and hope for children."

### **A safe place for parenting**

The church is the one institution that can be a "persistent and effective voice for children in the political arena," especially at the state and local level, according to Dee Whyte, executive director of the Massachusetts Children's Trust Fund. Churches should be "safe places" for parenting education and harbors for children and families in crisis, she said.

The coalition is sponsoring a resolution for General Convention that makes "children our number one priority," according to Johnson. And it supports a resolution that seeks half of the funds being returned to dioceses

and congregations by the Church Pension Fund for use in local and national ministries with children. The resolution also addresses the affect of drugs and the escalation of violence against children. The resolution was subsequently supported at a meeting of the seven dioceses of New England that constitute Province I.

--Jay Cormier is director of communications for the Diocese of Massachusetts and editor of Episcopal Times.

94131

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## **Rwandan church leaders plead for peace in their homeland and help from afar**

**by Jeffrey Penn**

As French troops were gathering at the Rwandan border to seek an end to the carnage in that East African country, Anglican Church leaders from Rwanda were attempting to marshal relief aid and other assistance during an international tour.

Describing the conflict in Rwanda as evidence of "the power of the devil," Archbishop Augustin Nshamihigo, primate of the Episcopal Church of Rwanda, condemned the killings and called on the international community to intervene "for the restoration of peace in our country."

"We cry out in agony as we see hundreds of thousands of lives perish in this senseless and unreasonable war," Nshamihigo said in a statement distributed during a June 23 visit to the Episcopal Church Center in New York. Traveling with Nshamihigo were the Rt. Rev. Jonathan Ruhumuliza, bishop coadjutor of Kigali, and Faustin Bilikano, acting provincial secretary and provincial development officer for the Episcopal Church in Rwanda.

### **History of ethnic enmity**

According to the church leaders, more than 500,000 Rwandans have been killed, another 500,000 have fled the country and an additional 3 million have been displaced within the country since a mysterious April 6 plane crash



killed the president of Rwanda unleashed a fury of ethnic, tribal and political warfare, primarily among the minority Tutsi tribe and the ruling majority Hutu. A centuries-long feud for political dominance between the two tribes has simmered beneath the surface and threatened to boil over into open conflict.

Rwandan President Jevanal Habyarimana was preparing to implement a peace agreement, the so-called "Arusha Accord," that would have instituted power sharing between the two groups, when he and the president of neighboring Burundi were killed in the fatal crash. Almost immediately after the crash, government troops and irregular Hutu militia swept into Tutsi neighborhoods, maiming or killing entire villages. International observers of the situation were horrified by the scenes of mayhem and carnage, prompting some—including UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros Gali—to describe the attack on the Tutsi as genocide.

At the same time, Tutsi rebels associated with the opposition Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) took control of one-third of the country and were poised on the outskirts of Kigali, the Rwandan capital, leaving similar scenes of death and devastation in their wake.

"This is what erupted into unbelievable civil strife that has left many thousands dead and homeless on both conflicting sides," Nshamihigo said. "All these [events] created fear and hopelessness among people."

#### **'What do we do?'**

"Many church buildings were destroyed and many church people have died," said Ruhumuliza. More than a million Anglicans lived in Rwanda before the recent violence broke out. Although church services continue in parts of the country, the murder of three Roman Catholic bishops and the massacre of thousands of Rwandans who sought sanctuary in church buildings has contributed to the fear that has gripped the countryside.

Denying earlier news accounts that an Anglican bishop in Rwanda was killed in the violence, Ruhumuliza reported that the 12 Rwandan Anglican bishops met twice to assess the situation. "We saw many dying in front of us of hunger, disease and homelessness," he said. At their meetings the bishops asked one another, "What do we do now?"

First, the bishops condemned the killing and called on the warring factions to negotiate a settlement. Second, the church leaders would appeal to Anglican and ecumenical partners for relief assistance. "At the moment food is the most urgent need," Ruhumuliza said. "We are in desperate need of medicines and clothing, but food is the first priority," he added.

However, Ruhumuliza emphasized that the war must end if the relief

efforts are to succeed. "Nourishment and clothing will not be sufficient if the war doesn't end between the two parties," he said. "Without that we will not be able to continue living."

Both bishops expressed disappointment that UN troops formerly stationed in Rwanda were withdrawn in the wake of the crisis. "We were in great need...and they left us there killing each other and in danger," Ruhumuliza said. He expressed hope that the French troops or an additional UN force "might be able to do something," but also pointed out that "to some extent it is too late because many people have already lost their lives."

### **Anglican Response**

The church leaders met with representatives of relief agencies in Britain, Canada and the United States. The Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief sent an initial emergency grant for \$25,000. Continuing response by the Anglican Communion is currently coordinated by the Anglican Church of Canada.

94132

## **Supreme Court rejects appeal on Colorado sexual misconduct case**

by Nancy Kinney

The United States Supreme Court declined May 31 to consider an appeal by the Diocese of Colorado and its former bishop, William Frey, in a sexual misconduct suit.

The highly publicized suit was brought by Mary E. Moses against Paul Robinson when she sought counseling. The case was appealed to the nation's highest court after the Colorado Supreme Court affirmed several rulings in the case.

Moses, who is now known as Mary Tenantry, brought suit against the diocese, Frey and Robinson in 1990 but Robinson subsequently filed bankruptcy and was dropped from the suit. The jury in the district court decided against the diocese and Frey on three counts: that the diocese and Frey were liable for a breach of fiduciary duty, negligent in hiring and supervision, and vicariously liable for Robinson's breach of fiduciary duty,



which exists when one person assumes the responsibility to act in another person's interest. Moses was awarded \$1.2 million in damages.

Upon appeal, the Colorado Supreme Court upheld two parts of the lower court's findings but reversed the decision about vicarious liability, thus lowering the award to \$728,100.

Attorneys for the defense argued at the state appeal that such litigation against the diocese and the bishop violated free exercise of religion under the First Amendment. The state court rejected that claim, saying that cases not involving the interpretation of church doctrine are permissible and not a violation of First Amendment freedoms.

The relationship between the church leadership and clergy has been a key issue in the case. Colorado Supreme Court Chief Justice Luis Rovira disagreed with the finding that the diocese and Frey were negligent in hiring and supervision. In his dissent, he wrote that the bishop and diocese were "capable of exerting influence" over Robinson but did not have an "agency or employment relationship" that made them liable for the actions of the priest.

In light of the highly publicized case, church judicatories are implementing changes in hiring and supervision of clergy. "We have come a long way in recognizing the problem," said William Fischer, vice president in charge of claims for the Church Insurance Company which paid damages in the Moses case.

"There has been a misunderstanding of the Episcopal Church throughout this case," said assistant diocesan chancellor Scot Peterson, reflecting on the court's view of the relationship between parishes and the diocese. "We do not believe that the diocese should be held liable for the acts of other corporations' employees."

**--Nancy Kinney is editor of the Colorado Episcopalian.**



## news briefs

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94133

### **Prince Charles questions role as church head**

Prince Charles is considering ending the monarch's role as head of the Church of England when he becomes king, according to a recent report in England's *Sunday Times* newspaper. The heir to the throne thinks the church should be disestablished because Britain is a multiracial, multi-faith society in which the Church of England has become a minority voice, the *Times* said. The report stated that, although the prince does not mention disestablishing the church in the interview, "it is clear he wishes to provoke a debate on the roles of the church and monarchy." The Prince said he would like his coronation oath to be changed from 'defender of the (Anglican) faith' to 'defender of the divine.' Bishop Michael Baughen of Chester said that he thought the Prince's role "is to be defender of the Christian faith." Baughen said that the Prince "seems to echo the popular view that all religions lead to God. I am not sure that the Prince believes that and I would like to sit down and discuss the matter with him." John Habgood, Archbishop of York, said that changing the oath "would be a difficult and dangerous thing to start tampering with because in the process of picking out some threads you do not know what else will unravel." Habgood later told the Church of England's General Synod that Prince Charles denied in a private conversation that he had any wish to change church-state relations or disestablish the church.

### **Controversy surrounds possible sale of church land**

A controversial plan by the Diocese of Washington to sell a rare stretch of forest in Maryland to a housing developer still faces passionate opposition despite government approval. Environmentalists, who oppose construction on the 515-acre Belt Woods tract because it is one of the last remnants of old-growth forest in the country, have launched an effort to buy the property and preserve it. "This is a unique natural habitat that can't be created anywhere else," said Pam Cooper, president of the Western Shore Conservancy, which



is heading the acquisition effort. Episcopal leaders have not challenged the property's ecological importance but have maintained that the church has an obligation to balance environmental concerns with its desire to raise money to support charitable projects.

### **'Continuing' Congregation becomes Episcopalian**

A congregation associated with one of the "continuing Anglican" churches was recently received into the Episcopal Church by Bishop Alfred Marble of Mississippi. Marble received, confirmed and reaffirmed 40 members of the Anglican parish of St. George into the Episcopal Church and ordained St. George's rector, the Rev. Walter Windsor, into the sacred order of priests. Windsor said that 10 years ago, when the congregation split from the Episcopal Church, there was no room for a divergence of opinions, but that this is no longer true today. "Both conservative and liberal wings are needed in the church," he said. "When one wing functions without the other, the entire body suffers." At a later date, the group will be organized as the Episcopal Mission of St. George.

### **Georgia's Episcopalians contend with disastrous floods**

"The water is still rising, so much tragedy, but spirits are high--much to do." In that short note to diocesan officials, the Rev. Tom Downs was describing the desperate flooding situation in Albany, Georgia. Through a modest newsletter he keeps people informed on developments and thanks them for their loving concern. In a day-by-day account of how the flood evolved, Downs said that, by Sunday, July 10, "We are the only church downtown which is able to have a Sunday morning worship. We invite everyone in the area to join us." The congregation included people from the shelter, reporters and visitors. The service was punctuated by the sound of helicopters evacuating people from the town. In surveying the scene, Downs reported that water was at the roof line at St. Mark's Church and over the roof at St. John's Church but the flood spared St. Patrick's and St. Paul's. "The cemetery near the river is flooded and coffins began to come out of the ground and float downstream," he said. In response to calls offering help, he pleaded for funds to feed and help those who have been forced out of their homes. And he added that "clean-up crews will be our second need--but not just yet." The Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief is accepting contributions and has already made emergency grants to the Diocese of Atlanta for \$25,000 and to the Diocese of Georgia for \$25,000.

### **Tutu supports efforts to limit population**

Despite criticism by Roman Catholic cardinals of a UN-sponsored program that would support population control, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, primate of the Anglican Province of Southern Africa, declared his support for a limited right to abortion and for artificial means of contraception. "In the Anglican Church...we would say that we believe that responsible citizens would want to be responsible parents and we believe that planned parenthood is an obligation on those who are Christians," Tutu said at a news conference in New York City on June 16. His remarks contrasted with Roman Catholic cardinals who have spoken out against some elements of a draft program of action that will be considered at an upcoming UN International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo. According to news reports, the cardinals have portrayed measures on abortion and women's rights sponsored by the United States as "cultural imperialism." Tutu said that family planning and limited abortion rights were "not just...a Western thing... There are very many [people] in other parts of the world who believe that [those issues] are crucial."

### **Bishop Howe clarifies his role in new group**

Responding to a Newsbrief item in the June 16 Episcopal News Service, Bishop John Howe of Central Florida has publicly withdrawn as a signatory of a covenant written by members of Episcopalians in Apostolic Mission (EAM), a group of traditionalist Episcopalians that was formed to maintain orthodox theological positions in the church. Although some participants of EAM had circulated a press release with quotations from a covenant, Howe said that EAM had not yet officially adopted it, but that individuals had signed a draft, "supporting it in principle." Although he acknowledged that he was "in substantial agreement with the direction the draft is taking, it is far from complete." Howe said that he will continue to be involved in the new group as it refines a covenant that might be the basis for future networking and advocacy in the church.

### **Carey says Christians should stop apologizing**

Too many Christians are playing down their belief that Jesus Christ is God in the false notion that it will aid interfaith dialogue, said Archbishop of Canterbury George Carey in a recent interview at the opening of the Canadian Christian Festival. "That will be the end of Christianity if we say that Jesus Christ is just the Western face of God," Carey said. The leaders of Islam and other faiths won't respect that approach, he said. Carey also challenged the idea that Canada is a "post-Christian country. Like Britons, the majority of



Canadians still believe in God, still trust their clergy and still have affection for the churches."

### **SACC searches for new post-apartheid era**

The South African Council of Churches (SACC), the fulcrum for the long struggle against apartheid, is looking for a new role in the reconstruction of a new society. No longer the powerful opposition to oppression, many of its members have entered government service and it has been forced into an intense reexamination of its goals and direction. "We meet here today after a momentous event in this country--a transition from the monstrous, evil and racist apartheid system to a non-racial, non-sexist and democratic system of governance," said SACC general secretary Frank Chikane at the annual conference meeting near Johannesburg. Saying that he believed that he had accomplished "the mission God through you called me to undertake" and that it is time for new leadership for the next phase of the council's life, Chikane announced his resignation. Chikane spoke of the new opportunities that the new order brings for the churches and contended that they must "remain a conscience of the nation." And he said that a new relationship with government will require "a critical solidarity."

### **General Synod approves agreement with Lutherans**

The Church of England's General Synod has approved an agreement with the Nordic-Baltic Lutheran churches that calls for full recognition of each other's clergy and members and a shared sacramental life. Archbishop of Canterbury George Carey called the Porvoo Declaration the most important ecumenical decision to come before the church in many years. When approved by the 12 Anglican and Lutheran churches, they will also share resources in common witness and mission. The Church of Ireland, the Church of Wales and the Scottish Episcopal Church have also signed the declaration.

### **Gallup reports increase in biblical illiteracy**

"Americans say they believe in the Ten Commandments, but they can't name them," said pollster George Gallup, whose company has tracked religion trends for 50 years. "And some Christians who are in church on Easter don't know what they are commemorating." Gallup reports that basic Bible knowledge is at a record low. Although eight in 10 Americans identify themselves as Christians, half don't know that Jesus preached the Sermon on the Mount. "The startling fact is Americans do not know what they believe or why," he said. "Biblical illiteracy presents not only a spiritual or religious problem in this nation, but a cultural one as well." According to Winton

Manning, a former senior scholar at the Educational Testing Service in Princeton, New Jersey, "Biblical literacy is not merely a matter of taste or a decline in cultural knowledge. Rather, the Bible has been the primary text by which the Western world has lived together and comprehended God, nature and mankind."

### **ECPC announces 1994 awards**

The Episcopal Church Publishing Company (ECPC) has announced the recipients of their 1994 awards. The women priests known as the "Philadelphia 11" and the "Washington 4" will receive the William Scarlett award "for their courage in breaking the barriers of gender-bound ordination," according to ECPC officials. The William Spofford award will go to Hanan Ashrawi, "an Anglican woman who has represented the Palestinians in recent peace talks and now heads a human rights organization." The Bill Stringfellow award will be presented to Chung Hyun Kyung, "an Asian, feminist theologian who breaks the molds. We celebrate her imagination and vitality." The Vida Scudder award will go to Louie Crew, founder of Integrity, who has "worked within the church, through all available channels, to open it to the ministry and presence of gay and lesbian Christians." The awards will be presented during the ECPC's dinner at General Convention in Indianapolis on August 31.

### **Kenya police close Anglican meeting**

A recent meeting organized by the Church of the Province of Kenya's Diocese of Kirinyaga and the League of Kenya Women Voters was forced to a stop when heavily armed policemen declared the meeting illegal. Bishop David Gitari and two local members of parliament were held hostage for more than two hours. Parliament member Martha Karua claimed the action was politically motivated and described it as the worst in the history of Kirinyaga. The theme of the meeting was civic education and the legal rights of women.

### **CPSA moves to incorporate African culture**

The bishops of the Church of the Province of Southern Africa (CPSA) recently approved the establishment of the Standing Commission on Christianity and African Culture, an initiative to incorporate African culture into Christian practice. CPSA Bishop Njongonkulu Ndungane, a leading figure in the initiative, said that many of the missionaries who came to Southern Africa were "people of their own time" who believed that almost all African practices were pagan and heathen. "They did not understand that Africans were a deeply religious people. They brought us Christianity clothed



in Western norms and we have done very little to alter that." The commission will hold a consultation during August and present a final report to the Provincial Synod in 1995.

### **Pre-Islamic Christian community discovered in Arabia**

Evidence of a pre-Islamic Christian community was recently unearthed on an island belonging to the United Arab Emirates. Excavations carried out by London University's School of Oriental and African Studies revealed a site on Sir Bani Yas island with at least one courtyard and no fewer than 15 rooms which were used by ancient Christians, the archaeologists said. The archaeologists determined that there had been a Christian presence on the site when they discovered five intricately carved stucco crosses near a collapsed wall. Though the discovery of a pre-Islamic Christian community was completely unexpected, according to Dr. Geoffrey King, field director of the excavation, finds over the past eight years have revealed churches in Kuwait, Qatar and Saudi Arabia which also date from the first centuries of the Christian era.—*Roy Keitzman*

### **Russia's mainstream churches criticize religious groups**

The positive changes that have brought religious freedom to Russia have also allowed "destructive actions by some religious and pseudo-religious groups" which have darkened religious and inter-confessional relations, according to Patriarch Alexei II of the Russian Orthodox Church. Alexei's remarks about the activities both of new "proselytizing" missionary movements and New Age religious cults were made at an inter-confessional conference on "Christian faith and human enmity" in Moscow and were supported by many Orthodox, Protestant and Roman Catholic church leaders. The participants, drawn from the mainstream denominations in Russia, the other members of the Commonwealth of Independent States, and the Baltic states, said that they were "concerned" about the activities of "pseudo-religious groups" whom they accused, in a statement issued at the end of the conference, of undermining "life, health, human rights, freedom and dignity."—*Ecumenical Press Service*

### **KGB successors return Russian Orthodox icons**

Twelve icons that were stolen from the Russian Orthodox Church in 1990 were returned recently to the church by Russia's federal counter-intelligence service (FSK), the successor to the KGB. The icons, many over 400 hundred years old, were handed back to Patriarch Alexei II of the Russian Orthodox Church, by FSK's director, Sergei Stepashin, in a ceremony at the Danilov Monastery in Moscow. "It is not a gift, but the return of the icons to

their rightful owner," Stepashin said during the ceremony. Alexei, thanking the agency, said that the icons belonged not to the church, but to the entire country.--*Ecumenical Press Service*

### **International finance bodies rebuked by ecumenical leader**

Konrad Raiser, general secretary of the World Council of Churches (WCC), recently told an international conference held at the European Parliament that international financial institutions increasingly served the interests of the powerful in the economic and profit centers of the north. "Churches are usually closer to the people than to the global structure," Raiser said, adding that he believed the WCC should "join forces--even more than it has done so far--with groups of civil society and non-governmental organizations in formulating and fostering alternatives that are a genuine expression of the aspirations of people." Raiser had been invited to discuss the European Union's role in the international economic order and its responsibility for sustainable development, alongside European Commission officials, members of the European Parliament, and witnesses and experts from the southern hemisphere and Eastern Europe.--*Ecumenical Press Service*

### **Church leaders urge universal health coverage**

In a statement recently delivered to members of Congress, Presiding Bishop Edmond Browning joined 30 U.S. church leaders in asserting that universal health care coverage is a moral mandate. "Anything short of health care for all is morally flawed," the statement said. "Religious commitment to the dignity and value of every human life insists on it. Our nation's history of failing to provide such care needs to be repudiated as a moral deficit that has stood too long." The statement, which was also circulated to the 140,000 congregations affiliated with the National Council of Churches, declared that "decisions touching every life are being made in these very days. By adding its voice of moral conviction and guidance to the public process, the religious community can, in concert with others, make a difference. The doors to health care resources for all people can be opened. It can happen how!"

### **German theologian warns of mainline Protestant demise**

For Christianity to make an impact, the churches will have to steer clear of fundamentalism and an acceptance of secular values, as well as "move beyond historic controversies" to become more united, warned German Lutheran theologian Wolfhart Pannenberg in a recent speech. Pannenberg said that mainline Protestantism may become virtually extinct in the near future because it is identified so closely with western culture, which is becoming



more and more secularized. As societies grow increasingly secularized, the church will have to "serve as a reference point" and a model of such values as tolerance, morality and the importance of objective truth, he said. Pannenberg made his comments at the annual Erasmus lecture sponsored by the New York-based Institute on Religion and Public Life.

### **Photostats of Convention Daily final issue available**

**Editors Alert:** *The Convention Daily*, produced by *Episcopal Life*, is offering photostats of the final eight-page issue that will contain summaries of General Convention legislative actions, roundups of issues and how bishops and deputies dealt with them, and a photo spread of activities. Stats will be delivered by Federal Express on or before September 6. These pages could become the center section of a post-convention issue, or editors can cut and paste, substituting photos and stories of their own diocesan delegations if they wish. Page dimensions will be 10.5 inches wide and 16 inches deep. The *Daily* will be set in Garamond 10/11 in a 14.03 column--information you will need in substituting stories. Photostats are available for \$85 for the eight-page set and must be ordered by August 19 from *Episcopal Life*, 815 Second Ave., New York, NY 10017.

### **General Convention telecommunications announced**

The following telecommunications resources offering coverage of the 1994 General Convention and related events are available:

- Quest International Inter-Anglican Information Network, an Ecunet partner network, will upload convention news stories as soon as daily releases are available. Quest users should join the *Episcopal News Service* online meeting to automatically receive these releases.
- A one-hour convention video featuring a selection of television reports on convention issues is also available. The price, if ordered before convention, is \$19.95 which includes shipping charges. Order item #50-377 from Episcopal Book/Resource Center, telephone 800 334-7626, or fax 212 661-1706.
- From August 23 to September 3, three minute reports will be available by 900 number telephone. These reports will be updated daily at 6:00 p.m., Indianapolis time. The charge is 90 cents/minute billed to the caller's telephone. English reports by Sarah Moore can be heard by calling 900 884-8875. Spanish reports by Sonia Francis can be heard by calling 900 884-8876.
- *A Vision of Wholeness: Overcoming Sexism*, a two-hour presentation by panelists at a joint session of the Episcopal Church Women Triennial Meeting, the House of Deputies and the House of Bishops, will be telecast nationwide by satellite. A one-hour question-and-answer segment will be included for



local downlink site participants. Those interested may inquire at the nearest Episcopal Cathedral Teleconferencing Network affiliate or make arrangements for a church group or organization to see the event at a community video facility. For more information telephone Gary Filsinger, electronic media resources manager, at 800 334-7626, ext. 5397.

### **Corrections:**

In the June 15 issue of ENS the Rev. Canon Bill Squire of the Diocese of East Tennessee was incorrectly identified as the Rev. Canon Bill Squires of the Diocese of Tennessee. Also in the same issue, the last name of Roger Boltz, associate director of Episcopalians United, was incorrectly reported as Bolts.

### **People**

**The Rev. Ishmael Noko** will be the first African to serve as the top executive of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF). The Zimbabwean was elected general secretary at a recent meeting of the LWF Council and will begin his new position on November 1. He is presently the director of the LWF department for mission and development. Noko said that the council's vote showed confidence in the churches of the south. Calling Martin Luther a "spiritual grandson of the Church in Africa," he said that the decision also reminded the churches in Africa that they have a contribution to make, that they "are not grafted in this movement but they are part of it from time immemorial."

**The Rt. Rev. Michael Nazir-Ali**, general secretary of the Church Missionary Society, was recently appointed Bishop of Rochester. Nazir-Ali will be the first non-white diocesan bishop in the Church of England. He moved to England from Pakistan in 1986 when he was appointed to Archbishop Runcie's staff to help with the planning of the 1988 Lambeth Conference. He is also a secretary of the Eames Commission, a member of the dialogue between Anglicans and Roman Catholics and the Church's Board of Mission.

**The Rev. Graciella Alvares** of the Evangelical Methodist Church in Mexico has been elected the first woman bishop in Latin America. Alvarez will succeed Bishop Ulises Hernandez in the Central Mexico District.

**The tentative mailing date for the next ENS release is September 7.**





## *news features*

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### **Presiding bishop's letter to the House of Bishops on the release of pastoral teaching by Episcopalians United**

Dear Sisters and Brothers:

I write to make you aware that, in defiance of the careful process established by the House of Bishops, Episcopalians United has released draft four of the pastoral teaching on human sexuality. They have issued a press release urging Episcopalians to request a copy of the report from Episcopalians United headquarters.

Further, the pre-Convention issue of their publication, under the guise of "critiquing" the report, is devoted to discrediting the report, the House of Bishops process, and the committee. I find this action utterly reprehensible and unworthy behavior for those who declare themselves to be part of our household of faith.

Careful reading of their newspaper and press reports, as well as exposure to their disgraceful fund-raising materials over the years, seems to indicate that they assume they hold the truth on all of the difficult issues before us, based on their unambiguous interpretation of scripture, which they categorize as "orthodox." They have determined that the fourth draft does not adhere to their position, and apparently believe they are therefore justified in using whatever means to derail the process the bishops have established.

They have characterized the House of Bishops process as "clandestine" and erroneously stated that it was the "unilateral" decision of the committee which made the process "needlessly furtive." As you are aware, the process reflects the House of Bishops efforts to respond to General Convention resolution A104s/a.

Episcopalians United charged that there has not been a dialogue. In



actual fact, we know that the teaching was not meant to be a dialogue but rather the work of the bishops in consultation with ethicists and biblical scholars. In addition, the teaching was informed by churchwide dialogue involving an estimated 30,000 persons, as reported on by Bishop O'Kelley Whitaker's committee.

Contrary to the substance and spirit of the Episcopalians United coverage, we know that the report reflects the faithful effort of the bishops to help the church continue together in dialogue as we seek to discover God's will. We know that our report will not be an end, but a beginning.

What I find the most difficult about the Episcopalians United action is that their organization has supporters in most of our dioceses, many of whom are unaware of the decidedly un-Christian tactics of Episcopalians United, and of its highly one-sided point of view. These supporters give credence to Episcopalians United claims, regardless of how misleading, incorrect, or totally disingenuous they might be.

It is very important that you know that I spoke yesterday in a conference call to all of the members of the A104s/a committee who could be reached, including Bishops Frank Allan, Steven Charleston, Mark Dyer, Rogers Harris, Richard Shimpfky and Vincent Warner and also the Rev. Barnum McCarty and Mary Meader. They are extremely pleased with their efforts on the fifth draft, which is significantly different from the fourth, based on the comments of the House. I regret that the debate around the church provoked by the Episcopalians United action will be about a document that is no longer relevant. I hope that energy will be maintained for a good discussion about the actual report itself.

I believe the most appropriate response to the action of Episcopalians United is first to be aware of it, which is the purpose of this letter, and then be prepared to provide, and to help your clergy provide, accurate information. More important, I believe we, the House of Bishops, must stay on the course we have been following over these last years, and continue to be guided by the Covenant that informs our life together. We must honor our process, which has been open and consultative, and we must honor our sense of what it means to serve as bishops.

**—The Most Rev. Edmond L. Browning**  
**Presiding Bishop and Primate**  
**June 24, 1994**